

FOURTH DAY

Friday 9 February 2018

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
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LEE SIROTE

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

FOURTH DAY

Friday 9 February 2018

The Speaker (**Mr Job Pomat**) took the Chair at 10.05 a.m..

There being no quorum present, Mr Speaker stated that he would resume the Chair after the Ringing of the Bells.

Sitting suspended.

The Deputy Speaker then took the Chair at 10.50 a.m., and invited the Member for Kairuku-Hiri, **Honourable Peter Isoaimo** to say Prayers:

‘Papa God mipla kam before you long displa haus blo pipel blo Papua Niugini, mi tok tenk yu long wisdom, knowledge and understanding yu givim long pipol blo mipla long makim mipla wanwan long kam makim nus/pes blong ol long Palamen long Papua Niugini. Papa God, mipla truly o ino trupla way representim pipol blong mipla em yu yet yu save. Aksens blong mipla long wanwande long makim pipol blong mipla tu yu save olgeta. Mipla man nating kam, olgeta samting em blong yu, including displa breathe of life mipla breathim mipla every day.

Papa God mipla tok tenk yu long lidasip ol lidaman blong mipla provaidim in the Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament, the Opposition Leader, olgeta ministas, gavanoas na mipl ol memba yu tasol supreme nay u tasol bos blong displa kantri. Olgeta pipol na olgeta risoses yu putim long en, as leaders mipla stap, yu makim mipla long mekim disisen long gutpla blong pipol blong mipla. Sapos mipla ino folowim tu, yu yet yu save. Long taim blong judgment displa disesen tu yu mekim. Mipla kam long disla giraun without nothing, na in the same way long de blong dai tu bai mipla go sem we, kam bek long yu with nothing again. So liklik taim mipla stap long em yu givim displa privilege long makim pipol blong mipla, yu expectim pipla tu long mekim right decisions na choices for na on behalf long pipol blong mipla.

As leaders, for today, mipla submit kam long yu blong planti blessings kam long kantri blong mipla long hevi mipla gat long em na olgeta hevi mipla get, mipla putim ling han long yu long skelim na givim blessing ikam.

Wantaim dispela mipla lotu long lotu yu yet toksave long mipla. Amen.’

QUESTIONS

Rural Electrification Program

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Mr Deputy Speaker, our plan says that by 2030, 70 per cent of the rural communities will be energised by rural electrification.

However, there are many high voltage lines that are linking towns and project sites from the power generation plants without consideration for many villages along the way. For example, we have over 150 kilometres of powerlines running between Kimbe and Biala.

Can the honourable Minister for Communication and Energy shed some light or direction on his plans on rural electrification of Papua New Guinea?

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

02/04

Mr SAM BASIL – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I thank the Governor of West New Britain for asking this very important question. Before I start, Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Prime Minister for making available the responsibilities for rural communication and rural electrification roll out program under my department. Mr Deputy Speaker, this year the rural electrification or energy department has been allocated K5 million under rural electrification to roll the program out.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this K5 million is too small to cater for the cost of high voltage powerline and it can only cater for 10 to 15 kilometre of high voltage power line which we cannot afford. Therefore, my department has now reverted to powering individual homes using Minimum Supply Kit from the step down transformer.

Mr Deputy Speaker, from what I gather from my secretary we are ready to power 1000 homes. Divide that by four regions and you have 250 homes. Our department would be calling up respective Governors and Members of Parliament to partner with the energy department so that instead of powering 1000 homes we can increase it to 2000. We do understand that there are many transmission lines connecting power generation site to towns and cities and project sites and many villages along the way are being missed. The villagers' complain that the power poles are merely decorations as it is not providing any service to them, it is only benefitting the urban population. Therefore, we will embark on powering homes that includes using of the minimum supply kit boxes. Currently, PNG Power sells them at K750, these kits can also be sourced for K500 from other sources.

Under the rural electrification program we are planning to put tree energy saving lamps in a household, one in the bed room, one in the living room and one outside. All types of houses are eligible for this program; that is the permanent, semi-permanent or bush material house.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I inform the Members of Parliament, especially those who have electricity running but are not connected to the village, from the main ridge into the village, we can only cater for 300 metres with our budget. It will start from the step down transformer and move 300 meters into the centre of the village and we will hook the area cable into each house straight into the Minimum Supply Kit unit. PNG Power will supply the easy pay metre which the people can pay using Digicel or Telikom network to purchase power in the rural setting.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this can also be applied to other power producers. For example in my district, PNG Forest Products are generating power and they have licence to sell power. We are encouraging them to come up with a user-pay meter system just like PNG Power so that we can roll this program out using their power. We will open up to any other power generating companies. The energy department that I am heading right now, I take this opportunity to inform the House that we have but a policy forward and it has been approved and we are currently working on the national energy authority bill which will come before Parliament. When that comes into place, the energy department will regulate power and energy in Papua New Guinea which means that we will allow for independent power producers to produce power and we may also license another company to compete with PNG Power to sell power so that we can have competition in this industry. Thank you Mr Speaker.

03/04

Oil and Gas Policy

Mr CHRIS HAIVETA (Gulf) – Thank you, Deputy Speaker, on Tuesday 7 February 2018, the Honourable Fabian Pok, Minister for Petroleum mentioned that he will bring to NEC new domestic market obligations for the oil and gas sector.

The Oil and Gas Sector does allow for domestic market obligations but it does not truly embrace the country's aspirations on how the gas should be developed or used. The provisions are focused entirely on commercial arrangements for domestic market obligations.

Mr Deputy Speaker, our country's expectation is that some of the gas must be reserved entirely for PNG to use for its own requirements.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this policy is well overdue and I commend the Minister for driving for endorsement and approval for his policy.

My questions to the Minister are:

(1) Could the Minister ensure that this policy is fast-tracked and the NEC approves the policy before the Pasta Gas compensated fuel and the Papua LNG Project commences their feeds proper in March of 2018 and August 2018 respectively?

(2) Could the Minister also ensure that the domestic market obligation provisions in the oil and gas policy is amended accordingly so that it is consistent with the new policy that the Minister will bring and NEC will adopt.

(3) Could the Minister ensure that all future commercial agreements relating to oil and gas developments ensure our aspirations on gas reservations is strictly adhered to by the developers?

South-East Gobe Project

My second set of questions on oil and gas relates to Gobe Project. The Gobe Project was developed under a unitization agreement covering South-East Gobe and Gobe Main until South-East Gobe was severed in 2008 as a requirement of the PNG LNG Project despite South-East Gobe containing some Gas sufficient to develop a small gas project.

The South-East Gobe Project is not in the PNG LNG Arrangements. Despite this I am encouraged to hear that the South-East Gobe field will now be used to generate power for electricity of Port Moresby.

My series of questions to the Honourable Minister are:

(1) Since a strategic pipeline is a pipeline that transports petroleum from two or more petroleum producing fields, could the Minister advise this Honourable House when the Gobe Project Central Processing Facility, serving both Gobe Main and South-East Gobe fields in the Gulf Province and the section of the pipeline from South-East Gobe to Port Moresby covering segment 6 and 7 in the Gulf Province and segment in Gulf and Central Provinces, will be declared strategic petroleum facility and strategic pipeline respectively.

(2) Mr Deputy Speaker, could the Minister also advise when the PNG LNG Project plant site at portion 152 will be declared a strategic petroleum processing facility as a strategic plant in that it connects a strategic pipeline to allow an integrated development that I believe is now planned for the Elk-Antelope project together in portion 152.

(3) Finally, the in anticipation of Kimu, Huramu, Barikewa, Elk-Antelope gas fields in Gulf Province as well as off-shore Paska Gas condensate fuel coming into production very soon, the Minister in accordance with *Oil and Gas Act* declare that Kutubu Oil pipeline system inclusive of the Kumul Marine terminal as strategic pipelines and facility to encourage these fields to be integrated and developed quickly. Thankyou

Mr FABIAN FOK – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I thank the Governor of Gulf for his very good questions.

Most of the LNG Projects are in the Gulf Province and he has been interested in working with me on many of these issues.

04/04

Even though it was included in the *Oil & Gas Act* that some of the gas will be made available to domestic market obligation, it was not captured in the PNG LNG Agreement. That is why the operators and joint venture partners in PNG cannot make available gas for domestic use. Only if the Prime Minister intervenes to allow the company to make available some gas for domestic use, such as to the power plant that will be used to supply power to Port Moresby. That is why the Government needs a white paper policy to work with the license holders and other developers to ensure that certain percentage of the gas that is produced from the field are made available for domestic consumption. Konebada Petroleum Park has been wasted because there has not been any domestic Market obligation in the agreement and therefore gas could not be made available for methanol plants, fertiliser plants and other things that are needed.

That is why the government under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Peter O'Neill, saw the need. Many felt they would bring in the gas but we will need some of the gas to be made available to power our electricity and for other by-products that can be produced for export and import substitution. We have decided to bring this policy and in the wisdom of the NEC, if it is approved then it becomes a policy of the Government where future gas operators and producers will now make certain a gas percentage is available for the domestic market use. With Kumul we are now looking at ways to transport this gas to areas like Kavieng, Manus and Bougainville and many other islands, so to ensure that electricity becomes cheap. We cannot do it now because of the agreement but in the future.

I can assure the Governor that the agreement will make sure that certain percentage of the gas from all fields will be made available for domestic market. We will be also looking at changing the *Oil and Gas Act* to accommodate the policy and what the Government agrees on. But it is now before the NEC and I cannot pre-empt their decision because no decision has been made. But there is a policy in place and when it is approved, then we will make some gas available which the country desperately needs for its energy use. And also for by-products like a methanol plant which will create employment for our people. These are some of the opportunities that we have missed because of the agreement that we have entered into.

Mr Speaker, I can assure the Governor that the future gas that is being produced, certain percentages must be made available under this policy and when we amend the legislation, certain percentage must be made available from all gas fields for domestic market use. That is why the policy has been brought forward by the Government, if it is approved by NEC then this is what is going to happen.

05/04

I can assure you that all future market gas agreements will have certain percentages of gas be available for domestic use.

Mr Speaker, the second question is very specific regarding certain pipeline which I have to seek more clarification on how it can be dealt with. But there is another policy the Government has put together called the Third Party Access Agreement.

Currently, there is only one pipeline owned by ExxonMobil and its joint venture partners so if Kumul is trying to propose another pipeline because there are many gases in Gulf, Western, Southern Highlands and Hela provinces that needs to be brought in to a central location for export and for domestic market use.

Because there is only one pipeline and there may be two or three more pipeline later to become strategic pipeline, Government has already brought a strategic pipeline policy where third parties can put their gas through and pay a tariff so that we can access these gas easily. Now some of these fields are not being developed because of the problem with pipeline.

But with the clear guidance from the Government on how it should be done with the clear leadership of the Prime Minister, the directors should do the pipeline policy. Once we have the policy in place, then there is clarity to all the other fields. They can develop the gas and bring it to a central location for export and also make it available for domestic market use.

All the three policies I mentioned last time are before Cabinet so I am sure all the other developer who want to develop the fields will make use of it so that we will make a policy that is beneficial to both the developers and this country and the people.

Sepik Plains – Excessive Road Funding

Mr JOHN SIMON – Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, I have series of questions for the Prime Minister. In the last term of Parliament, the O'Neill/Dion government allocated K50 million to the Department of Commerce under Sepik Plain Agriculture Development and we understand that the K50 million was spent in one district only in East Sepik.

In this year's budget, there are significant amount of money being allocated to various projects to that district again and parked under the Department of National Planning. Under that, there is a K21 million allocated under the Sepik economic zone again.

The last K50 million for the Sepik economic zone was spent in only one district. Now we have another money allocated for the same name and could be spent in only one district again.

There was another K37 million allocated for the feeder road in that same district which is only a seven kilometre road under the name of enabling cocoa and vanilla production. The districts currently in East Sepik which produce lots of vanilla and cocoa are Wosera-Gauai, Ambunti-Drekikir and Maprik districts.

06/04

My questions are;

(1) After the K50 million was spent in the last five years for that one district, what was the output that was achieved by that project and that has now convinced the O'Neill-Abel Government to allocate more money to that particular district?

Mr Deputy Speaker, the largest part of the Sepik Plains we continue to allocate money starting from Angoram in Wewak and even goes as far as Nuku and Lumi in West Sepik and even my district of Maprik and not only one district which is Yangoru-Saussia.

Mr Deputy Speaker, also for the record the largest producers of vanilla is in East Sepik and most probably the second largest vanilla producers in the world are in Maprik, Ambunti-Drekikir and Wosera-Gauai.

(2) What study does it determine that the spending of K37 million on a seven kilometre feeder road in an area with no history of vanilla?

(3) Why can't we allocate this K37 million to help the farmers in Wosera-Gauai, Ambunti-Drekikir and Maprik where they have records of producing a lot of cocoa and vanilla, at this stage?

Mr Prime Minister, the K37 million that will be allocated to a seven kilometre feeder road will be the best feeder road in the district and in the country.

Can the Prime Minister inform the people of Pua New Guinea, why this one district so important to your government to continue to get more money than any other districts in this country? And

(4) Can we go by the record and find out how much have this particular district contributed to the revenue of this country to get such an amount of continuous funding?

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr PETER O'NEILL – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I thank the good Member for Maprik for his very interesting questions.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am aware of the allocation of K50 million in the last term of Parliament to the very important agriculture area of the Sepik Plains. This is because of the much talked about agricultural potential area for many years by previous governments but yet there has been no attempt to develop the Sepik Plains to make sure that it not only provides employment and income opportunities for our people but to provide food security for our country and have export potential for some of the agricultural exports that we are trying to achieve.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will get the department to give me a full report of the details of how that money was expended, I am not privy to it but I will table it in this Parliament before we rise. I will take the opportunity to answer the Members question in detail, but generally I am aware that it is not spent in one project alone. I am told that it is spent to develop infrastructure so that we can enable investment in agriculture in that area and I know that the Sepik Plains is a large area which runs from Wewak to Angoram to Yangoru-Saussia and it is a potential that we need to develop.

07/04

Mr Speaker, we already have investors who are willing to invest in oil palm, cocoa, vanilla and develop poultry in large scale in that area, so that our farmers can sell their produce to that particular industry in the Sepik Plain.

One other area that I am told investment will take place is in the Sepik Plains and that's growing of rice. There is already investors who are now looking at that great potential. I am certain that we will develop that in this term of Parliament and that is why we are investing quite heavily in that particular field. Just like we invest and give opportunities in Ramu and Baiyer River Valley. These are big large agricultural areas that we need to develop. We talk about agriculture and yet we don't invest in that. For the first time this Government is trying its best to allocate money and support in that sector.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in respect to the K50 million, I will give the specific account of the expenditure before this Parliament rises.

Banap Bridge Re-constructive

Mr CHRIS NANGOI – Thankyou Mr Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to ask my question to the Minister for Works and Implementation.

This is in relation to the collapsing of Banap Bridge, which is in my electorate of Sumkar District.

Since the bridge collapsed in January 2018, it made headlines in the media but the progress of the work up till now is very slow.

The collapse of the bridge has caused so much inconvenience in all sectors. The most affected people are from my district especially the Sumgilbar and Karkar Local-Level Government.

The people of Bogia District are also affected because this is their only link that connect them to Madang Town. And the people who travelled by boat from Sepik via Bogia and people from Middle Ramu are also affected as well.

Mr Deputy Speaker, according to provincial statistics apart from Madang Urban, Sumkar and Bogia Districts contribute immensely to the internal revenue of the province.

The most affected people are from my electorate and that's the only route that they use to move their local commodities such as copra, cocoa, buai, fish and garden produce to the market and too the PMV operators are badly affected.

I thank the Minister for National Planning and Implementation and Minister for Fisheries for visiting the affected site.

Mr Minister, it has come to my attention that there was an allocation of K5 million for a bypass to be built.

(1) Can you confirm whether this K5 million has been allocated?

(2) If so, is it for the bypass for Banap, Wasap and Matugar or for a new temporary bridge to be constructed next to the collapsed one?

(3) If this allocation is for the construction of the bridge then when exactly will the work commence because my people want to know?

08/04

Mr MICHAEL NALI – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. First of all I have to thank the honourable Member for Sumkar for asking those very important questions.

The bridge collapsed on the 4th of January because a construction company was moving a big excavator over a lobe way.

Mr Speaker, according to advice I received from the Department of Works, this bridge is a very old bridge as is the case in many other parts of the country. We have a lot of bridges that have served their time and will need to be replaced.

This particular bridge was under design to be replaced but that does not mean that the bridges was not serviceable. Unfortunately, overloading made it collapse.

Mr Speaker, at the moment the Department of Works has put in place a 10 kilometre by-pass and in that 10 kilometres there is a lot of trouble from youths who are targeting commuters along that road.

Mr Speaker, it is becoming common in many parts of Papua New Guinea where when this like this happen the sympathy and empathy towards our countrymen disappears and many different demands are made.

I am not saying that our people in Madang are the only ones doing this but the Department has gone ahead and negotiated with the youths along the by-pass and engaged them to participate and ensure the road is accessible.

Mr Speaker there is a pier right in the middle of the bridge itself and half of the bridge is intact while the other half has been washed away. What we are trying to do now is to temporarily restore half of that bridge while we get to do major design and work to have a new bridge built.

Mr Speaker on the question of the K5million kina the Department allocated and whether it is for the by-pass only or the bridge also, I must make it very clear that if I say that the money is for road access I might create another bushfire.

We don't have too much money to play around with so this K5million, may be more or less will be utilised to make sure that we provide access and restore this bridge.

Mr Speaker, while I have the opportunity I must also explain to the Parliament that we have had another culvert breaking in Goroka. It is next to the Jogijoy Bridge and the old cemetery.

The day before yesterday officials from the Department brought bridge panels and other bridge parts and put up a closed bailey bridge which was launched yesterday. Since there was not enough counter weight, when they launched it its head nosed-dived into the place where the bridge was first broken but we were able to restore that yesterday and the Okuk Highway is now open.

Mr Deputy Speaker, while I have this opportunity I wish to also say thank you to someone who has been close to that highway over a long period of time. I must say 'thank you', to the Managing Director and owner of Mapai Transport Mr Jacob Luke.

On the Highlands Highway he is the only man that everyone who lives along the highway know. If any big problem arises they only await the action of Mapai only. Mapai comes in with trucks, tow trucks, cranes and other heavy equipment. Mapai is always on standby so I want to take this opportunity to speak so that the Parliament must acknowledge the efforts of people like Jacob Luke whose presence is felt all along the Highlands Highway. The Highlands Highway is serviced by a whole lot of great truckies.

But, Mr Speaker, a lot of the problems that we have along our highways is to do with overloading.

09/04

I must use this opportunity to inform all the trucking companies and their clients to be aware of the damages that can be caused by overloaded vehicles because these bridges can only take certain amounts of weight. I will have to say to everyone that we will have to be strict and penalties will be applied on abuses of national and provincial roads. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Distribution of Road Machinery

Mr RAINBO PAITA – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for Works in relation to the current projects undertaken by the department.

One of the initiatives that I embrace is the initiative by the Plans and Transport division, where it purchases the machines and then make arrangements to construct roads in the country.

Mr Minister, in regard to that initiative of purchasing road building machinery, when I checked for the machines with the districts and the national departments they had different views on the use and ownership of that machine.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the information I received is that, the department has ownership over these machines, however, it will give the machines to the districts to lease out, whilst the information was, the ownership will be transferred to the district to own and operate.

(1) Can there be a clarity on the ownership of these machines and how we in the districts can access these machines?

(2) If the answer yes, that is if the ownership of these machines will be transferred from the department to the districts, what criteria will be used to transfer these machines?

Some of the districts are completely inaccessible so what will be the criteria used to transfer these machines. For example while it is a ten-hour bus trip to travel from Lae to Mendi,

it takes 48 hours to travel from Lae to my district Finchhafen. So can the districts who are more disadvantaged in terms of accessibility be more prioritised in terms of distribution of plant and equipment to build roads? Whilst we understand the cash flow situation of our country and the very tough times ahead, I just want to know the criteria that will be used for the transfer, if we want to give them to districts to own and build their own roads. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr MICHAEL NALI – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I thank the honourable Member for Finchhafen for his very important questions. Mr Deputy Speaker, the Plans and Transport division of the Department of Works still exists. Although it was forced to close by way of Government decision. In the past many equipment from the Department of Works were used to carry out maintenance and many other functions, but we have not seen that in the last 20 years.

Mr Deputy Speaker, as I speak, we don't have any equipment with us because of that decision. But while I have the opportunity, I want to thank the people of Japan through their embassy. JICA has given us a lot of machines on two separate occasions. In the first instance we received 200 equipment. These equipment have been distributed throughout the regions. For the Niugini Highlands region, the machines are in East New Britain. For Oro Governor, the equipment are in Lae and needs the Governor's assistance to ship them over to Oro.

10/04

We also have equipment in Wewak and other parts of Momase region. We also have equipment in the Highlands region.

The Government's wish to make sure that although we may not build up a big capacity like we used to have before it is important that we must have plant and equipment in every provinces to take care of emergency cases like what we are faced with now.

If the Department of Works equipment are available in your districts, you are free to utilise those equipment whether you are in the National Government or in the local level government. These equipment are not privately owned. If you have a problem with it, you should inform me because these equipment are here for us to develop our district.

We have within the Department of Works engineers and managers' right throughout the country so if you have no equipment to construct your road it would be better for you to allocate some of your DSIP funds to Works so that they can do the job for you.

I have said this on one or two occasions already. For instance; the Buliminsky Highway is in perfect condition so we should set a contractor to cater for such highway and make sure that there is no pothole. The contractor's job is to check for any cracks and potholes and repair quickly.

Enga Highlands is in perfect condition and we must put in place one or two contractors to look after these section. The highway is now going to be rehabilitated and we are going to spilt Highlands Highway into four or five different sections and we will put in contractors to look after these highways to make sure that we fix any potholes. So we pay the contractors on the basis of their attendance to these work.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I am confident that most of our main highways will be in good condition and we will not spend more money on these main highways instead we can save money and give access to those people who are in remote areas like Menyamya, Finchhafen, Kabwum, Kopiago and out in the Strickland areas, Teleformin and Oksapmin.

These are the things that I would like to do. I have the energy but I do not have the fund to facilitate these things. Thank you for understanding my situation.

Mr PETER ISOAIMO – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to direct a general question to the Prime Minister.

On the 9 January, the landowners of lower Sogeri where the government installation of water and power supply exist. The disgruntled people raised their concerns on how Koiari benefit funds was abused and miss-used by one of our government minister who is also a ministerial committee chairman on Koiari Funds.

They made it clear in their petition that the Chairman of the Ministerial Committee and his First Secretary with five others from the landowner group collaborated and lied to the registrar of national court to drawn down K9.85 million which was kept in the Trust Account due to the disagreement with the Government for the first payment of K20 million.

I am asking this question to the Prime Minister because the issue is of national importance, especially when we are approaching national events that are going to be hosted by this country.

11/04

I am not condoning the actions of landowners or people of my electorate but as leaders, it is my duty and job to take a lead and find the best solution. Moneys were supposed to be funded for land mobilisation and to carry out land investigation to invest some for our future

generation but our people in authority seem to have vested interests in the use of moneys belonging to our people. In this case it is the Ministerial Committee Chairman and his first Secretary who have vested interest because they used the first secretary's company to channel the funds through. Without the knowledge of the ILG Chairman, a Company called Lower Sogeri Ltd was incorporated and the locals, unaware, were made shareholders because during the presentation of the petition, they were all present and they exercised dissatisfaction over the deal that was made without their knowledge.

Mr Prime Minister, all these actions have elements of fraud, misuse and abuse. So I believe we should order an investigation into it. The landowners are also asking if the Government can reimburse their K9.85 million. The people gave me until 06 February, because I told them, Parliament would sit on this date. They extended this further to this day because I have advised them that the petition as a whole cannot be presented on the Floor of Parliament according to advice from our legal in the parliamentary service.

(1) Can the prime minister order an investigation into this matter?

(2) Can he also inform the people whether the K9.85 million can be reimbursed?

Failure to meet this, the resources is in their hands but as their elected leader, it is my duty to present their sentiments and I make this on behalf of my people.

Mr PETER O'NEILL –Thank you Mr Deputy Speaker, and I thank the Honourable Member for Kairuku-Hiri for his questions. It is a serious matter that you have raised. We do not condone such actions. We will certainly look into it and this is the first time I am hearing of this particular account of the incident and the disbursement of these funds. I will take into account of what you have stated and I will get our officials to investigate this matter immediately. Before Parliament rises next week, I will give you are full account of what has happened, and the appropriate actions that we will take. But I want to assure our people that it is not the entire population or the entire government that does these actions. It is one or two individuals in the process that take advantage of the situation and abuse and misuse money and we all get blamed for it.

I appeal to the people to not take the law into their own hands and allow the due process to take its course. We will make the appropriate actions that they desire, to ensure that what is rightfully theirs is restored and find ways to make people who have abused or mismanaged and the allegations that you have raised to account for. There are other cases as well, where there are grievances by landowners or people who rightfully wish to express their dissatisfaction in the way their funds or issues are being managed, and to take up on disrupting services,

destroying assets and property; these things cost money and who is going to pay for it? It is the tax-payer and every one of us are paying for them.

12/04

We are seriously looking at ways to say this course must be met by those who are destroying those properties. That's the last thing we want to do so common sense must prevail. Our doors are always open to try and listen and do the right thing so in this case I will report back to the Parliament as I have indicated earlier about the issue about the Sepik Plain.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Question proposed –

That the grievances be noted.

Mr GARRY JUFFA (Northern) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a few comments about matters of grave concern to us as elected officials from various provinces and districts with responsibilities to our people with hope to deliver these responsibilities and meet their expectations and drive changes in the public service machinery.

My debate is more specifically on the Special Parliamentary Committee on the review of the Public Service, the initiative of the then O'Neill-Dion Government. I was the Vice Chairman of that Committee and the Chairman was Bire Komisopa and later Elias Kapavore who is now the Minister for the Department of Personnel Management which is very commendable because in my opinion, there's no better person to head that Department after Sir Puka Temu did his part and his best.

Mr Deputy Speaker, my grievance debate is on the fact that, that Special Parliamentary Committee's term ended. I would like to propose that the Government do consider reviving that committee so that it can continue with the good work that it had started. It had delivered five reports which highlighted significant issues that need to be addressed. It is an initiative of the Government and it must continue so that we can see it come to fruition.

The Parliamentary Committee conducted a study of the Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and the Samoan Governments' public service machineries so that we can propose changes and recommendations as to how we can modernise our public service machinery. Our public

service machinery which I am sure all of you will agree is outdated and very much in need of an overhaul since 1975. It is a rusty old machine which cannot deliver to our expectations.

While we come here and discuss and debate and at times insulting one another, the reality on the ground is that it is the public service to perform those duties and deliver the government programs that our people desire and deserve.

If we do not modernise, restructure and build this machinery then all our hopes and dreams and our term in Parliament is really a waste of time because it will not happen to our expectations and desire.

Those studies and reports found that Papua New Guinea was ranked well below these four countries and their public service machineries. Samoa for instance, is well ahead in terms of how it treats its public servants.

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Fiji, for instance, their turnaround time and their policies in regards to how they respond to their public when they turn up in various government departments for services, it is very succinctly spelt out so that they must respond within a period of time.

For example, just last week a relative of mine came to Port Moresby, to chase up after her land title which has not been issued to her for three years. There are many such stories in each and every province and district where Papua New Guineans who desire services are turning up and being turned away or being misled and is costing them significant amounts of money primarily because this Public Service machinery has never been upgraded and modernised. And here we have this opportunity where those reports have made significant recommendations as to how we can modernise the public machinery, use modern technology that is available, put in place control machines and mechanisms to ensure that our public servants perform as expected. At the same time to provide them the capacity that they need to ensure that they are paid remunerations sufficiently and given the benefits that they deserve so that they may get out there and perform their duties.

When we achieved independence, the lowest ranking public servant like a cleaner or a driver had houses, decent wages and had the capacity to deliver their services. Today, senior public servants are living in settlements and villages and they are unable to perform. How can we expect them to perform if they are not remunerated or not given the benefits? This recommendation addresses all of that and it is yet to be tabled. Certainly some of the report will not attract positive reactions from some elements of the Parliament but they are up for

discussion and debate, whatever it is, the fact remains and we must modernise the public service machinery.

So, I urge the Government to firstly, table this report and secondly, to reactivate the Special Parliament Committee. They have started already by appointing the Chairman as the Minister for DPM, which will be the vehicle that will bring about change. The other Reports that the Special Parliamentary Committee produced were on Health Management, Lawyer State Committee and Teachers Leave Fares these reports revealed concerns to each and every one of us some issues that need to be and must be addressed.

Therefore, I believe that it is important that this Special Parliamentary Committee be reactivated so appropriated committee members be selected and appointed. There is more than enough capable people here on both sides of the House and we can work together to bring about the changes to modernise the public service machinery so that we may be able to achieve our dreams and our people can get the services they desire and deserve.

On a short note before my presentation time expires, I would like to just make a point here especially to the ministers, I heard the Minister for Works talk about warning companies of how they behaved. Now, you are in charge of government departments which are expected to enforce the law so find out in your departments the capacity to enforce those laws and enforce them. Stop warning people and start actually enforcing the law. This is what's currently happening, we keep warning people and we are not enforcing the law.

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At a time when we need revenue, we should get out there and find these perpetrators; be it individuals or private businesses to be compliant to our laws. It is up to us to enforce the law and impose it on them. You just try and go and do the same in their countries and you see if they will just warn you. No, they will enforce the law and deport you instantly.

That is what we have got to do. We have to enforce the law. We keep hearing about Chinese influence or Asian business but what are we doing to enforce the law?

It is not their fault. They are here to do business. It is our fault for not enforcing and imposing penalties.

I would like to propose that government agencies and departments look at partnerships with the provincial governments where we have a number of public servants in the provinces whom we can use to enforce those laws. I know many Ministries do not have the capacity to do that. But the provincial governments can do it on your behalf. They can collect the fines and

penalties and share them with each district and maybe remit 5 per cent back to the National Government and keep the rest for administrative costs for instance.

Isn't this a great idea? Don't you all agree with this?

Let's do it. You are in the Government and you in the position to make all these things happen. We can give you this type of brilliant ideas from the other side of the Floor and we all can work together and transform our country and economy.

Mr JOE SUNGI (Nuku) – Mr Deputy Speaker, I raise my grievances on the issue of sticking to our areas of responsibility and making sure we respect each other in carrying out our duties and responsibility in the country. What we can achieve out of this is that we can save a lot of resources.

For example funding and allocations for the national functions remain at that level. When the country is facing some times of economic hardships and we literally running short of cash it needs critical thinking. We have to come together as national leaders and as a parliament to change the way we doing things with resources and costs.

One of the areas where we all can meaningfully contribute and take ownership is the avenue where we are been allocated development funds at the district level and make sure we don't duplicate that at the provincial level or the national level. If it's the national function then that funding stays with the national function and it does not go anywhere.

Mr Deputy Speaker, out of the 111 Members of Parliament in the last Parliament, 62 Members did not return after the elections. We have 62 new Members of Parliament here. Out of the 62 Members in the last Parliament, 16 of them were Ministers.

That is enough to tell us that it is not just about the money. On record, the last Government under the current Prime Minister actually provided a lot of funding to the districts and the provinces.

I remember very well that the Prime Minister kept on repeating that if you do not come back in the elections, it is your own fault.

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I think that was the message so the question is, how can we do it better if we can have that funding down at the district level? I cannot comment a lot about the provinces but let's consider the way we run our businesses and I am talking about basic hygiene of the government itself. So, you have to respect the jurisdictions and boundaries of governments.

For example, in NCD there is quite a lot of confusion because a lot of the money that is supposed to go to the districts and provinces are used here. Having only about 500 000 to 600 000 population, it is not big compared to Morobe Province; the largest province in this country.

When you compare the billions of kina spent in Port Moresby, it is not even a billion kina in Morobe. I think we should look at how best we can do it fairly based on the area of responsibility. We are all mandated and this mandate comes with the population we represent and my being here is to represent the people of Nuku. Each of us represent our people individually in here.

So, let's respect each other and not focus solely on our interest, for example if you are a Minister, you are a Minister of Papua New Guinea and not of your own electorate. If you look at it from that angle, we should all be fair and we shouldn't be fighting around like this.

It does not matter whether you are in the Opposition, in Government or whatever, the main thing is that we represent our people in the House of Parliament. I think if we can respect this, we should be okay.

I'd like to provide some guidance and assistance in terms of funding. If we can park the funding at the district level then we shouldn't be going to the Minister again and asking for other money because we already know that we all, as elected Members have our allocations.

I must state here for the record of my district, how much money I got, it all came from the government, I didn't get any money from elsewhere. The DSIP that I have relied on for the last five years can be seen in the result of what I have done with the roads. In the history of this country, since 1975, PMV buses have never travelled to Nuku.

But today, with the support of the former Planning Minister, the Prime Minister and the last government, PMV buses are now able to travel to Nuku from Wewak. And it does not start from the district headquarters, no, it starts in the most remote LLG which was forgotten for so many years. The bus starts from there.

I wish to go back to the subject of concentrating on the districts. If we develop them and improve their capacity and support each district in this country, then you can be able to measure it at the end of five years and see what you have done.

Some of us will collect extra money, pile it up, for example NCD. NCD electorates are not districts by definition. They have no wards. Where is the LLG? By definition, they are not supposed to be called districts. And therefore, they are not qualified to be given the District Support Grants. That money is better off being given to Menyamya or Telefomin.

Yesterday, I asked a question to the Police Minister. For example, money earmarked for the Police Department is spent in Police houses in Port Moresby, neglecting the districts out there.

And since Police is a national function, our DSIP allocated to individual districts will now be expended on the Police Force. We may use another guideline but I think it is not fair for NCD to get some other money and while all the police money is spent in Port Moresby to build the houses, districts are struggling with their DSIP to build the Police houses.

Do you see the picture that we are going through? This is the current scenario we are experiencing right now. I think we need to rearrange and come to a better way so that we can share the resources and say this district is your area of responsibility and by planning now, people should know the indicators of each district.

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In terms of health and education, if there is problem in one of the districts then financial support should be given to maintain the good performance of each district. In that way we can bring the performance of that district to be at par with the other districts like NCD.

At this point in time critical thinking is needed very much. If we can put money at the district level and build the capacity of the districts then we shouldn't be going to the ministers to fight over funds that are parked at the ministry. The ministry will only look after the affairs and wellbeing of the national level.

For instance, the Minister for Police with the full support of the Commissioner for Police looks after the law and order issues in this country. And the question of purchasing firearms will be taken care by certain sections of the department. It's not the responsibility of members of Parliament to go around purchasing firearms. They are trained to handle firearms and it is their line of duty.

The other point is accommodation for police officers in the country. It seems more attention is given to police officers in Port Moresby. As for other provinces and districts we the individual members had to take funds from DSIP to build houses for our police officers. This is unfair distribution.

Mr Deputy Speaker, if we can organise ourselves in that manner and not step on other members toes then we will be fine.

My dream concern is that I want to see all the Ministers take a nationalistic approach because you are given a ministry to serve the people of PNG and not to always think of your

electorate. Any funds allocated to your ministry is not to be distributed to your electorate only. Some minister are doing well but others must improve.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for allowing me to share my grievances.

Mr SASINDRAN MUTHUVEL – Thankyou Mr Deputy Speaker. I also want to share my grievances with my other colleague members, especially regarding health sector.

We have a very good Minister who is capable of this ministry and can take full control of the real problem of health issues in the country.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Provincial Health Authority in West New Britain has signed agreement with the authorities of other 10 provinces.

In the past, the rural health services were under the responsibility of provincial administrations. And all general hospitals in main centres were under the care of the Department of Health. But now it's all merged and under the care of Provincial Health Authority. This authority can survive because most of the donor agencies like ADB have agreed to assist and also it's the vision of the National Government to take care of each of the provincial general hospitals.

It is a very good concept and the responsibility of the health is equally shared by the Provincial Government and the National Government, 50 percent to be taken care by the minister and other 50 percent by each governors. In that way it will update the provincial health status of both sides

Mr Deputy Speaker, since the inception more attention is given to the main general hospitals and the rural health is continuing to deteriorate. We have more than 128 aid-posts and all of them don't have good working facilities.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the main problem now is the accommodation for health workers, if we provide good accommodation for them then they would want to stay there and attend to the sick people. But since accommodation problem is of no attention than they have no choice but to live in town and go to work in rural areas.

We tried our best in whatever little revenue from the province that we collected to assist in that but still the need is huge.

And the other main issue is the responsibility of the health authority to take care of the health affairs of the entire Province.

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Unfortunately, I doubt the capacity of the provincial health authority and whether they really have the capacity to cater for the rural health centres in the two districts of Kandrian and Talasia.

We were fortunate to receive community projects through ADB. There was lack of coordination especially through the DDAs and through the Provincial Government. We do not receive constant update on plans for the whole Province.

I am not suggesting that when the rural health were under the Provincial Government it was properly attended to, however I am saying there was less complaints from the people. But a lot of people have died now because of lack of attention to the rural health.

Mr Deputy Speaker, for instance; there is a hospital in Kimbe which is not far from the Capital Kimbe. It is known as Busi Health Centre. It is a government facility that was in operation since 1967, the birth place of many prominent public servants.

This facility was closed about five months ago due to a break and enter and in assaulting of a nurse. The PHL demanded for the suspect to be surrendered which the community assisted and brought the suspect forward to the Police. Yet until today this facility is not opened. That is the message that I just received.

At the end of January, I spoke with the PL who also spoke to CO but they still did not re-open the facility. Five months ago we lost 35 lives. Many children have not received vaccination. Mothers are also giving birth in the wheel-barrow. This place is not too far from the Kimbe town. Do the authorities care?

Today in the newspapers, doctors are complaining as to why the Minister for Health is trying to bring in doctors from Cuba. Likewise, concerns have been raised as to why the Minister for Education is also going to India to bring in teachers.

Why do we have to go that far to bring in teachers, engineers and manpower? The Singapore population is 6 million. There are about 3 million professionals and they built their country.

I am not suggesting to bring in all the expatriates. Many expatriates in Papua New Guinea do not know about other parts of the country. They only know about Port Moresby. So we need to send some expert expatriates to be stationed in the rural areas in order to see the real things.

Mr Deputy Speaker, this is a real concern. I am aware of the intention and concerns of our doctors here that we only produce 50 doctors. That should prompt the government to establish a medical university where we can produce medical students, however, in the event

that we do not have the capacity we should help our children to study overseas to obtain medication degree. So that we can produce more doctors.

Training of about 50 doctors is no way compatible. We need 300 to 400 doctors to be trained and sent into rural areas. That is the reality.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the word doctor is available only in town. There is no such thing as a doctor in district headquarters. So if a Member is willing to fund to bring in a doctor, which means that he is concerned about his people.

So we should not be complaining as to why we want to bring in professional into the country. If a Member can fund the doctor to give health services to his people, so be it.

I have seen a lot of challenges especially during the arriving of medicines and equipment. However, I heard that if Busi Health Centre was to be re-opened we have to buy medicine for K100 000 along with some equipment.

The funding for procuring medicines and procuring medical equipment is given to the National Department itself.

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This funding for procuring medicines and medical equipment is given to the National Department of Health. I am not saying and even in this year's budget we have captured close to K500 000 to procure medical equipment and medicine. But the main issue is that when I allocated K250 000 in 2013 Budget and until 2016 this money was not spent to buy medical equipment. I had one doctor recommend certain equipment and medicine whilst another said they did not really need these and recommended another. They are competing to who will buy it. I said why not buy from renowned companies. Finally they agreed to purchase from some company known to them.

There is always a lack of coordination within the provincial health authorities and completion amongst the authorities is making services slow to reach the people. Generally it all goes down to our attitude and care. If I fall sick tomorrow I will ask my family to take me out of Kimbe and rush me to Port Moresby and that should not be the case where I have to have confidence only in the main hospitals. But this is the case where there is infights, jealousy amongst authorities in the province. In spite of allocating money, it is a sad reality, when they say no medicine and equipment is the cause of most hospitals closing doors to its people. When I made the budget I saw there was still K4 million unspent, this is mostly our functional grants. They said the Provincial finance did not coordinate well with them so they did not spend it.

When I asked the provincial finance office, they said they were given invoices during the time when accounts were closing around November.

I want the Minister to look into PHA as we are continuously disagreeing on this power but we really care because it our province. It depends on who you know, if you are someone high above the, you get treated if you're not than you wait down the line. And if it is a foreign doctor he will not differentiate, wantok or not, you will be treated and that is the sad reality.

Mr ALLAN BIRD (East Sepik) –I wish to share same sentiments as shred by the Governor for West New Britain. WE Members have the interest of our people at heart and we want to provide services for them that is why we contested to represent them here. During the six months that I have been Member, I have observed that every time we want to do something with the aim of assisting our people but I feel that sometimes I feel that I have differences with personalities whether we are Members or if you're Minister, our focus is not on the people and I feel that this has created problems.

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Since time I became the Governor, the people at the administration are reluctant to work with me. But I have to understand them by letting those who have worked there more than twenty-five years know that I am not here to grab your job, I am interested in our people.

When we were doing PSA work, I want to raise the standard of the service, not to raise my reputation or gain favour but to get the job done so a mother or a child can benefit from the medical services when required.

When I was the chairman of the hospital for four years, I realised that when we wanted to raise the standard of the services, we often clash with the Provincial Health Advisor where he does things on his own with all hospitals in the districts down to the wards and LLGs.

We realised that 80 per cent of people were coming from everywhere in East Sepik province including Nuku and Lumi in search of Health service because all hospitals in the districts were not operating when they were under the Provincial Government. When the idea of PSA came in, we quickly took it and I'm happy with the Health Minister and the Government's support on this. But the biggest problem is that our problem is opposite to that of West New Britain province.

Yes, we have received functional grant of K3 million out from the K11 million promised by the National Government. But this fund reached us in November and I spoke to the Health Minister that we need the fully funding to see if the system works or not. If the

system is fully funded and no changes comes from it, then we can make further changes. But if we allocate K11 million and only give K3 million which arrived in November, it's only with six weeks before accounts are closed.

I also saw in the Provincial Administrators office that claims were just lining up there for signing, I asked him to stop and leave them aside and only pay for the critical things.

For the East Sepik budget, K15 million arrived very late in November so we will use it this year but we still have not received the full allocation. We did not receive them in full. Weather it's in health, education, rural infrastructure to support open members in their districts, the funds always come very late.

I personally feel that, when the National Government sits and consider the National Budget the Treasurer should to take note if we need additional funds for other work, this additional funds must be consistent with one of the provincial need or a national agenda. It is not good for one or two Ministers discussing and deciding to go and take extras for themselves which is not consistent with a national or provincial agenda at the expense of the service delivery as they wish.

Whatever money you parked aside, for one project is all there. There won't be extra money coming in because there is only one budget that we all have to share and get the result out of it. There needs to be very strong justification

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There needs to be very strong justification. I know that if I go and put in a PIP Submission because I want to improve health care or I want to improve education, we are all competing across the country. The question is who are we going to yes to, and who are we going to say no to and what is the criteria? Is the criteria based on me being a minister and I take care of the money so I can get an extra amount and the rest of you don't get any? Or is the criteria based on I am a friend of the Treasurer so he will give me extra? What is the criteria and how does it serve the national interest?

For instance, if we are going to do a project in Morobe or Southern Highlands or Yangoru we all must be clear in this House, we have to agree that it serves a national purpose where we will all benefit. We cannot just do it on a piecemeal basis and the funding for services is cut down because we have to look after a pet project. Then, later we come and blame the system and the public servants but in reality we did not do the allocation properly in the first place so when we are facing difficulties now we cut costs and provinces end up with 25 to 30 per cent of the functional grant and we come back here and do the merry-go-around all over again.

Mr Acting Speaker, I think we can do our work better by simply raising our standards. We have to raise our own standards, Parliament about what we want to achieve and the kind of work we want to do.

In East Sepik, I heard many buildings going up all over the place. This was happening long before I came to Parliament but the standards are low and that is not because the foreigner came and he wanted to bring his own standards. It is because we have our own Sepik Engineers and other Sepik professionals who are here and we are happy with lowering the standards so we erect a building right on the road where it should be reserved for the future generation to expand.

Mr Acting Speaker, these sort of things must stop and we need to want to have higher standards whether it be in education, health care, road construction or in building construction. We must be the custodians and push for these high standards. Only when we push for this in financial management, we push for this high standards then when the foreigners come they will have no choice but to follow these high standards. Our own people too will be able to know that the standard is this and they will rise up from their low standards because their leaders are pushing for high standards.

Now, I really want to achieve those high standards and I am hoping that all of us here want that too. As we sit here, I have the Education Department and the Teaching Services Commission in my province doing investigations to fix the education system in my province. I invited the Institute of Engineers, the week before, to come in and investigate all of the buildings that are sub-standard in my province, and they have. I want Sepik's to recognise that in Papua New Guinea, we all need high standards. We cannot continue to accept poor low quality standards in our financial management in the way we distribute resources and then we cascade that down into everything we do. It is not how much money we allocate but it is about the quality of what we achieve at the end.

Mr Acting Speaker that is what I wanted to share with my fellow Members in the House and I thank you all.

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Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance and Rural Development) –
Mr Deputy Speaker, I agree with all the sentiments shared in regards to performance, funding and duties and responsibilities. Let me make a few observations or remarks.

Mr Deputy Speaker, sometimes there is a delay in the issue of warrants or funds to merge some of the intentions of various budgets. Since 2012, our Government has tried our absolute best to stick to many of the core programs that we have put into the Budget to ensure that our focus of service delivery remains.

Let me bring to light some of the major focuses of the O'Neill-Dion Government then and now the O'Neill-Abel Government in as far as districts and provinces are concerned.

Let me be the first to admit that we do not have the luxury of the fullest resources to ensure that all the needs of the country or districts are met, I am also the first to admit for the first in the history of our nation our districts and provinces are consistently receiving some sort of funding from the National Government.

Mr Deputy Speaker, when you look back in history, in 1995 or there on when the reform on the Provincial and Local Government was first introduced there was a transfer of functions to the provinces and districts in as far as the *Organic Law on Provincial and Local-Level Government* is concerned.

In that transfer of functions there has never being any serious matching of resources of funds to match the transfer of functions towards the districts. This was for a long period of time and maybe because there was budget constraints.

Mr Deputy Speaker, as Minister for Finance for the last six years and looking into the actual envelope of resources available in our country you really cannot blame Governments of the past but I can say that maybe it had to do with policy or because there was not much transaction then. But in the last six years we have transferred so much to provinces and districts.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in this grievance let me highlight the element of allocation in each districts and province.

On a minimum allocation each district since 2012 up till today and by now the latest disbursement of DSIP would have received K42 million. On that same allocation trend for the next five years we will have allocated K42 million to K50 million because it is the Governments policy up to 2022. When you add from the K42 million in the last five years and add on the next years that would have been an envelope of K90 million plus to all the districts across the country in the space of 10 years. That sort of money has never being allocated to districts before.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the statement made by the Member for Nuku is quite clear and evident that money alone cannot win elections. Those Members had within their disposals K42 million to K50 million in the last five years.

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That money alone cannot win elections because Members had in their disposal K50 or K40 million in the last five years including the latest K2 million that we received. So what I am trying to impress upon the House is that funding now, and as part of the O'Neill-Abel Government's and the Alotau Accord II's focus is that the districts and provinces will continue to receive funds. And whilst we have every right to sound out on the structural impediments and the lack of delivery in the big picture, the districts and provinces will continue to receive the support that we will give as a government.

In the Finance Department, we are trying to tidy up and ensure that there is no policy or instrumental impediments insofar as your delivery program is concerned and as expeditious delivery policies are assisted to ensure you deliver your programs quickly.

We will also be releasing clearer and neater financial instructions to assist every district to deliver to the intentions of our government and the needs of your districts.

Now, we must make those sectors come to work. In a space of 10 years, from 2012 to 2022, those of us who are totally dependent of DSIP or PSIP will each receive almost K100 million for our districts.

So, if K100 million or K50 million in the last five years cannot change a district, I ask this honest question, what else can change a district?

Members before our time, and you only have to ask the senior Members, before their time they had only K250 thousand for the discretionary and the non-discretionary components. So when you put the two together you have only K500 thousand.

The point I am trying to drive home, Members of the House is that whilst the K10 million may not meet the entire needs of our districts put together, systematic planning and planning that also entails the visions of our National Government, linking on to the provincial government, it will work.

Many of us work in isolation. There has been many a time conflicts between us and our governors. I am one of the open Members that always try to respect the provincial governors. They have that space. We must respect their place. Let's also anchor our plans into their plans and then, hopefully the provincial government's plans may have some anchorage in the National Government's visions and together, systematically, we can tick off some of the things that need to be ticked off in our country.

In my capacity as Finance Minister I will be asking those of you who came in today into this term of Parliament to ensure that some of your plans also has links to what was done previously.

Let's not come in and re-invent the wheel again. A classroom that was built by a former Member is left to decay while we build a new primary school right next door. So, let's try to anchor our work program consistently, side by side with what has already been done and align our plans with the plans of the provinces including plans of the government.

I envisage to bring a paper before Cabinet to isolate Planning Department, Finance Department and Treasury Department from becoming implementers of programs that is meant for sector departments, districts and provinces. For too long, the central agencies are being the implementers of programs at the micro level. Allow departments and the departments will have the luxury to run your provinces but it will all be consistent with the National Government's plans that the Planning Department and Treasury lays out for us in the budgets.

So, hopefully some of those discussions that are coming on that one Minister is becoming a super Minister or one minister is looking after his district only will become something of the past.

It is not the intention of our Government to centre some programs in one district or region. And we all must appreciate that when that becomes the case in point, some areas miss out.

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For instance, in the issue of the Sepik Plain, the intention was clearly simple. There's a whole vast plain that starts from Wewak to Angoram to Nuku. It is the biggest plain we have in this country and so close to some of the greatest agriculture export destinations. We do not want to make it become a district programme. It is a national programme meant to cater for agriculture growth centre for our country. However, if the intention of the programme has been hijacked then it is within the radar of this Government to fix and I think our Prime Minister has taken serious note of those issues. We will tidy all these issues.

I want to bring to the attention of the Members of Parliament that the Government is giving budget allocations straight to the districts but it may not be to the fullest to the need prevalent to your districts however, make good use of what comes to you.

For instance, in my district, I built a college not out of the national purse because I am the Finance Minister. There has been no cheques from the Department of Finance going to that institution except for a K200 thousand that was given when officers were using that institution to reside for a two-day conference that they had there. Make use of your district funds and your district plans must find a place in the provincial plans. Hopefully, your provincial plans finds

a place in the national vision we set out by the Treasurer and National Planning Minister in our Government.

Mr LEKWA GURE (Rigo) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to contribute in the Grievance Debate.

Many of the speakers touched on many issues and what I am going to talk about will be related to them. I want to talk about the quality of education in Papua New Guinea at the moment. It is a topical issue and many sectors of our community do comment about the quality of education in Papua New Guinea. The quality of many other aspects of modern Papua New Guinean very much depend on the quality of education that we are providing to our younger generation.

Firstly, I think all of us must acknowledge the wonderful social policy that the O'Neill-Dion government introduced. The TFF Policy is a wonderful policy and many parents right throughout the country are relieved that this policy is in operation.

But the policy itself as wonderful as it is has inadvertently introduced some difficulties into the system. Because of the TFF Policy, where many of the parents were not able to pay the school fees, they are now able to send their children to school. As a result the enrolment in many schools especially in elementary, community, primary and high schools have increased significantly. That in itself introduces other issues.

I am sure many of us in my vintage who went to school in 60s, 70s, and 80s, the ratio of students to teacher was in the order of 24 to 30 to a teacher. We are not trying to reinvent the wheel here but with stet student to teacher ratio it is conducive to effective teaching and effective learning.

However, as a result of this wonderful social policy of TFF student ratio these days even in the National Capital District has shifted. My wife is a teacher by profession and in the days that she was teaching the student to teacher ratio was sometimes in the order of 60 to 70 students per teacher. Imagine the work load that the teacher is under. In many ways that ratio is not conducive to effective teaching and learning. Many people have commented that in the classroom these days, it is not teaching and learning but more or less child minding. The teachers are only minding the children.

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It is not unusual in many schools especially in urban centres where there is bigger population to find three to four students per desk.

My next point is about teachers. I know a little bit about this because before I came into this Parliament, I was the board chairman of our local school in the village. Firstly, teacher absenteeism is a real issue in many of the rural schools. There are many contributing factors why teachers are consistently being absent from their schools.

Many teachers come to urban centres either chasing up their pay or trying to cash their pay cheques mainly because there is no banking facilities in the rural areas. That is one of the reasons why many of the teachers spend a lot of time in the urban centres.

Posting issues also contribute to teacher absenteeism. They are posted to one school and before they know somebody else changes the decision and they are posted to another school. So there is great confusion and therefore, teachers spend a lot of time chasing up after their postings.

Another typical issue that comes up at the end of every year is leave fares. So all these issues contribute to teacher absenteeism in many schools right throughout the country.

The quality of the teachers themselves also contribute to poor educational quality in Papua New Guinea.

Today, we read in the papers that Education Minister will be travelling to India to look for Indian teachers to teach Maths and Science. I dare say the three core subjects of English, Maths and Science; many of our students this day can barely write leisureable English. They cannot string together words to make leisureable essays because they spend too much time on their mobile phones with scripted messages.

Many of the facilities right throughout the country as with any other sectors like health and education are very run down. We are talking about class rooms and boarding schools dormitories and staff houses. Then it brings me to the issue – who is responsible for which schools, is it the Governor of the province or the Open members?

I guess everybody is competing for political points where the Governor wants to build a classroom in a primary school. The Open member wants to build a dormitory in a secondary school. In my mind I think there should be some demarcation where the Open member could be responsible for the smaller schools like elementary, community and primary schools and the Governor with the bigger budget be responsible for high schools, secondary school and perhaps colleges as well. Then, there is usual communication helping each other out. But there should be some guidelines as to who is responsible for which level of schools, so that everyone knows their area of responsibility.

DSIP and PSIP is for infrastructure development or for development purposes. So many of us in the provinces and districts try to do the level best with the funds that we are given.

Then we read in the newspaper that one particular electorate in NCD gets K70 million to build one school so where is the justice in that.

I think many of the speakers have raised the same issue. One particular school is given K70 million to build the school while many of us are struggling to build one classroom or one dormitory.

Once again, I think there should be some fairness in the whole system. So with those few remarks I thank the Deputy Speaker for giving me the opportunity to contribute to the grievance debate. Thank you.

25/04

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS) – I want to join my other colleagues to participate in this debate and raising four controversial issues that I have observed during my tenure of office, almost 16 years now. My first point is on structural issues. I have learnt over the last 16 years that all these issues of inefficiencies of delivery of public services. The Honourable Governor for Oro always stands up and complains about public servants in the country. I have come to a conclusion that our nation is dealing with major legislatively aligned structural issues that is causing impediments to governance and service delivery. Before we became independent the first speaker of the Assembly, the late Sir John Guise, advocated for regional governments rather than provincial governments. But the current president of the AROB Honourable Dr John Momis advocated for provincial government system. So when we became independent in 1975, the Organic Law on Provincial Governments was passed in 1977. That dictated a legislative structure for governance in the country. So we broke into linguistic, geographical, provinces and districts. We debate about unity, law & Order, building public infrastructure but even I know in 1995 Mr Ben Micah's team recommended the Organic Law on Provincial Governments and added Local Level Governments. Another layer to the already two levels of legislature.

There lies our structure by law and so we move into Highlands provinces, NGI provinces, Momase and Southern. My debate is, I think these crop of leaders which I believe so much on. If you close your eyes now, you will realise that in seven years' time we will be celebrating our 50th anniversary as an independent state, which is during the 11th Parliament. We need to put our thinking caps on now and say can these legislative structure be serving us well or not? I believe that is a fundamental question we leaders today really should be using the Floor and say hold on; let us talk about it. When Oro Assembly meets they do not worry about Morobe, or Milne Bay, they only talk about Oro. When Abau DBA meets I only talk

about Abau. On this Floor we come and talk about unity. Honourable leaders, I want to start the conversation on re-looking at this structure that we have established through legislation.

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I think because of this civil servants cannot deliver. Public Service interfered by Government, for example. Not independent enough, highly trained and qualified. I became a Minister and I think I know everything about my ministry, we automatically claim that we know everything about the responsibilities that we are tasked to do.

Mr Deputy Speaker, to invoke your imagination, I'm suggesting that maybe we should do away with those provincial boundaries. I think we are looking too much at the provincial boundaries because we are politicians and we speak political language.

Let us re-look at it and maybe cut Papua New Guinea into six regions for six state government. Maybe Manus, East Sepik and West Sepik; Western, Gulf and Hela provinces; Oro, Central and Milne Bay; Enga, Southern Highlands, Western Highlands, Eastern Highlands and Jiwaka; Madang and Morobe; AGB, New Ireland, East New Britain and West New Britain for six state government where we can talk regionalism and unite the country more. There we can put public infrastructures such as highways, freeways and by ways through all these areas.

I think our nation has suffered a structural issue. World Bank reminded us in around 1994 that we have a structural issue as a nation so we had the Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government, so I am talking about re-looking at the entire structure of the government that we have acquired. This is the first debate I want to lead.

Second debate is that we need a Parliamentary Reform. I think we should have a bicameral system, not a unicameral system. I think many governments use their government powers to pass laws even up to making changes to the constitution or the organic laws or the enabling laws.

Parliament does not become independent enough as a legislator so I'm suggesting we have the upper house and the lower house so that all the proposed laws can be fully debated at the senate level, including the Budget. It can be blocked before it comes here because some areas may be disadvantaged and some sectors may be disadvantaged so I'm suggesting we have a bicameral system.

In seven years time, we are going to celebrate 50 years of independence. Are we going to continue this regime for the next 50 years, or smart leaders like all of you together in this term of Parliament can restructure ourselves when we go into the 11th Parliament in 2025. What

will the Prime Minister announce to the nation on Independence Day on 16th September of 2025? I think we should have a bicameral system of government.

Number three point is that when we re-look at the state type of government, I'm suggesting that the National Parliament to be shifted to where it was originally meant to be, Arona Valley. That's the centre of the nation so we should start planning to relocate the National Parliament.

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The state of Northern, Milne Bay and Central provinces will occupy this Parliament building but the National Parliament goes to where it was originally dreamed to be in Arona Valley and we build a modern Parliament where our people can get together so in the next 50 years we are operating in a brand new parliament in Arona valley.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Motion – That the grievance be noted – agreed to

ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr Solan Mirism**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1 p.m..